

# It's Your Business

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### **SBA has three different types of Resource Partners to enable FREE and confidential business counseling and training for small businesses.**

- Expert business advisors can assist you in financial projections, business plans, marketing strategies, and much more.
- Our Resource Partners can provide business counseling to all types of firms.
- To find an SBA Resource Partner near you, please visit [our web site](#)

Helping small businesses **start, grow and succeed.**



Your Small Business Resource

## **Building a solid floor in Lincoln for EMO's business, thanks to SBA financing**

When Bill Richter was a young man, his father drilled a lesson into him, one which has followed him all his life: "Don't ever ruin our name."

Even as Richter started his own business, naming it after an old nickname he picked up playing in a country and southern rock band in the 1970s and 80s, his father's words stayed with him.

Since 2002, EMO Flooring, Inc. has served Lincoln with quality carpeting, laminates, vinyl and ceramic floor coverings. The business also offers expert assistance to coordinate decorating ideas with flooring choice, and professional installation. Richter's 30 years of industry experience and partnerships with 31 Lincoln-area contractors helped cement the company's growth.

As the market for new housing construction in the area softened, EMO Flooring downsized its small staff to three full-time and three part-time people, cut what used to be a generous and wide-ranging benefit package to zero, and turned toward jobs they could grab in retail remodeling.

"We were builder-oriented, putting in flooring in new homes, but instead now we've seen a lot of homeowners remodeling their existing house instead of building a new one," said Richter. "It might be a bathroom, a kitchen backsplash, a basement room, maybe a room addition."

As if the economic conditions in the city weren't bad enough, the company had two notes

(see *EMO Flooring*, page 2)



**Bill Richter.**  
(Courtesy EMO Flooring, Inc.)

## **TOP NEBRASKA BUSINESS, LENDER NAMED BY SBA**

James Bowen and Nick Bock, and their company, Five Nines Technology Group, LLC, located in Lincoln, have been named the Nebraska Small Business of the Year for 2010 by the SBA.

The information technology firm was nominated for the honor by Marisol Rodriguez, Director, Nebraska Business Development Center, Lincoln.

Five Nines is an information technology company providing managed services, IT support, and consulting services to small- and medium-sized businesses in the Midwest. An SBA-backed line of credit from Cornhusker Bank in December 2008 was crucial to drive continued growth of a small business that has to date retained more than 95 percent of its clients.

For attitude and results, Omaha's Centennial Bank has been named the Nebraska Community/Rural Lender of the Year for 2010 by the SBA.

Centennial, in the face of a credit crunch

and a deep recession, has seen its assets and loan volume shoot up dramatically over the past two years. In 2009, the bank saw its loan volume rise by more than 22 percent and assets by 28 percent.

Starting in 2006, Bank President John Sorrell led the effort to grab a niche in small business lending; the \$1.5 million cap on loans set by the SBA is perfect for the bank's size. They've had enough growth in assets to raise their legal lending limit from \$600,000 per loan to \$1.9 million. There's been enough work to hire additional staff within the bank to handle processing SBA loans and to strengthen relationships with their clients. The percentage of their portfolio devoted to SBA loans shows the direction this bank is headed: they've gone from four percent in 2007 to five percent in 2008 to more than 20 percent now.

**For more on the story of our top small business and lender, visit the [SBA Nebraska District Office web site](#).**

Over the most recent 15-year period, small business created a conservative estimate of 65 percent of net new private sector jobs.

*SBA Office of Advocacy,  
March 2010*

*“Without the SBA, I would have had to continue to find a bank to do business with me. I don’t know ... I don’t think I would have found a loan.”*

## SBA LOANS EXPLAINED AT VETS’ EVENT

The Omaha Veterans in Business Forum (VIBF) will host a half-hour presentation on the SBA loan program April 21 from 7:30 to 9 .am. at the Regency Lodge, 909 S. 107th Ave., Omaha. Michael Foutch, a business development specialist in the SBA Nebraska District Office, will offer details on the SBA’s standard 7(a) loan, Express loans, government contracting and other programs available to start-ups and existing small businesses, and will take time to answer your financing questions.

The VIBF is a monthly networking and educational breakfast open to the public for business owners and representatives who want to team with veteran-owned businesses in Nebraska.

Please register in advance [online](#). The cost for the breakfast is \$15; please make out your personal check to the Regency Lodge. Cash also is accepted.

## BUILDING A SOLID FLOOR FOR BUSINESS

(from *EMO Flooring*, page 1)

called in by their lender, West Gate Bank in Lincoln, even though the business wasn’t behind nor had missed a payment. Never mind the bank’s underwriters required the move; for EMO Flooring, the news couldn’t have come at a worse time.

Fortunately, Richter worked with West Gate Bank to get approval of a Rural Lender Advantage Loan with the 7(a) program under the provisions of the ARRA to waive the SBA’s fees and increase the loan guaranty to 90 percent.

EMO Flooring’s \$130,000 loan was approved Sept. 9, 2009, and was disbursed Oct. 1. The financing combined the business’ two existing loans and even lowered the company’s interest payment, increasing the firm’s monthly cash flow.

“That’s taken the stress off, knowing I can still make my payments,” Richter said. After a pause, he continued. “Without the SBA, I would have had to continue to find a bank to do business with me. I don’t know ... I don’t think I

would have found a loan.”

In recent months, EMO Flooring almost has more business than they can handle. The remaining employees have been doing the work of two people, and Richter has been putting in 10-to-12-hour days, going over order tickets, making sure the company can capture every cent in revenue they can. With the cutbacks in labor costs and benefits, despite the total volume of business over the past year the least since the company opened eight years ago, net income has doubled in the same period.

He says he’s got plans to start adding more staff, soon, he hopes.

“I see things going up from here on,” Richter said. “I’ve seen more new construction bids in the last month, more than I’ve seen in the last nine months.”

Richter said that as the small business lending environment remains tight, he sees his competitors “hurting,” and there’s a constant fear driving him that he still may go under. But with the SBA’s help providing working capital, the hope is that day never will come.

## WHAT IS A RURAL LENDER ADVANTAGE LOAN?

The SBA’s Small/Rural Lender Advantage loan program is part of a broader SBA initiative to promote the economic development of local communities, particularly those facing the challenges of population loss, economic dislocation, high unemployment and other obstacles to small business success.

Some of the advantages of this loan program include:

- A streamlined, simpler, and more user friendly 7(a) process for small loans (\$350,000 or less)
- One page application (two sided) for very small loans with key, but limited additional information required for loans above \$50,000
- SBA guarantees 85 percent of loans of \$150,000 or less and 75 percent of loans greater than \$150,000
- Loans centrally processed through SBA’s Standard 7(a) Loan Processing Center, but under the provisions of the Recovery Act, guarantees are raised to 90 percent.
- Expedited SBA processing with routine loans processed within 3-5 days
- Lenders can transmit applications via fax and eventually online
- Simplified SBA loan eligibility questionnaire to help small or occasional lenders meet SBA’s eligibility requirements
- Training on SBA program requirements from local SBA offices

## GET THE REAL STORY ON SURETY BONDS

Learn how to capitalize on contracting opportunities in Nebraska's HUBZones and the process involved in obtaining a Surety Bond during free seminars in Omaha.

The HUBZone Empowerment Contracting Program stimulates economic development and creates jobs in urban and rural communities by providing Federal contracting preferences to small businesses. Get the straight scoop from Kathleen Piper, Deputy District Director at SBA, on how to qualify as a HUBZone business.

Do you need a bid, performance or payment bond? Learn about SBA and private sector Surety Bonds from Sarah Starks, the bond representative from Davis Companies.

This seminar will be April 13 from 3:30-5:30 p.m. at the Omaha Small Business Network, Inc., 2505 North 24th Street, and April 20 from 5-7 p.m. at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, 1003 S. 24th Street.

Please make your reservation now by [e-mail](#) or by calling (402) 221-7211.

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## Bring your sack lunch and find out how to TAKE THE MYSTERY OUT OF SBA LOANS

**April 28, 2010**

**11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

**Panhandle Research & Extension Center  
Cotton Wood Room  
4502 Avenue I  
Scottsbluff**

**April 29, 2010**

**11 a.m. to Noon**

**North Platte Federal Building,  
U.S. Post Office & Courthouse  
300 East 3<sup>rd</sup>, Room 316  
North Platte**

An important source of financing for entrepreneurs is the Small Business Administration (SBA) guaranteed loan program. The SBA provides short- and long-term guaranteed loans to eligible, credit-worthy start-ups and existing small businesses that cannot obtain financing on reasonable terms through normal lending channels. SBA provides a number of loan programs for most small business needs.

During this brief, you'll learn the steps you can take to help get the financing your small business needs.

- We'll explain the importance of a strong business plan
- How our resource partners -- SCORE and the Nebraska Business Development Center -- can help you
- Find out why lenders use SBA guaranteed loans in their financing projects.
- And, take advantage of the chance to get answers to your small business financing questions.

Make your reservation now by [e-mail](#) or by phone at (402) 221-7211.

*To learn more about  
SBA's ARRA  
programs and other  
resources for small  
businesses, please  
visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).*

# ARRA ACT IMPACT IN NEBRASKA

As of March 5, 2010, SBA has approved 467 Recovery Act-funded 7(a), Express and 504 loans supporting \$183 million in lending to Nebraska small businesses. Moreover, 60 America's Recovery Act, or ARC, loans for \$1,994,900 have gone to Nebraska's small business entrepreneurs.

Since last March, the average weekly loan volume of Recovery Act and non-Recovery Act loans in Nebraska has jumped 82 percent in dollar volume compared to the two months preceding passage of the ARRA.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RECENT LOAN APPROVALS

Program	Borrower Name	City	Loan Amount	Lender Name	Lender City
ARC	AQUA SYSTEMS OF NEBRASKA	LINCOLN	35000	PINNACLE BANK	LINCOLN
7A	Bright Smiles Family Dental	Wayne	701000	BANK OF THE WEST	TRUCKEE
504	Emerald Care Co.	Lincoln	1588000	NEBRASKA ECONOMIC DEVEL CORP	LINCOLN
7A	Orion Healthcare Technology In	Omaha	100000	PINNACLE BANK	LINCOLN
7A	Sport Clips	Omaha	208000	SPIRIT OF TEXAS BANK, SSB	COLLEGE STATION
7A	Pen Steel, Inc.	OMAHA	75000	FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF OMAHA	OMAHA
ARC	Stem Gallery, L.L.C.	Lincoln	35000	WELLS FARGO BANK NATL ASSOC	SIOUX FALLS
ARC	S & T ADVENTURES, INC.	IMPERIAL	35000	VALLEY BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	SCOTTSBLUFF
7A	CMMT MANAGEMENT, INC.	BELLEVUE	25000	WELLS FARGO BANK NATL ASSOC	SIOUX FALLS
ARC	COWAN'S CUSTOM CABINETS	GERING	35000	PLATTE VALLEY BANK	SCOTTSBLUFF
7A	Royal Painting Group	OMAHA	7500	U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	CINCINNATI
7A	BLAKELY ENTERPRISES INC	NORTH PLATTE	15000	U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	CINCINNATI
7A	KRYSTAL'S NAILS	LINCOLN	29000	U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	CINCINNATI
ARC	CALVIN CALLANDER	HENDLEY	35000	FIRST CENTRAL BANK	CAMBRIDGE
7A	Water Engineering Inc.	Mead	250000	PINNACLE BANK	LINCOLN
7A	PRECISION COMPOUNDING PHARMACY	OMAHA	25000	PINNACLE BANK	GRETN
7A	LITTLE DOLPHINS DAYCARE	PLATTSMOUTH	30000	NORTHWEST BANK	SPENCER
7A	LITTLE DOLPHINS DAYCARE	PLATTSMOUTH	80000	NORTHWEST BANK	SPENCER
7A	Dorsey Eyecare, P.C.	ORD	195000	FIRST NEBRASKA BANK	VALLEY
7A	Nebraska Scooter Mart LLC	Lincoln	550800	MUTUAL OF OMAHA BANK	OMAHA
7A	D & D CONSTRUCTION	VENANGO	85600	ADAMS BANK & TRUST	OGALLALA
7A	RICKMAN ENTERPRISES LLC	LINCOLN	100000	CORNHUSKER BANK	LINCOLN
7A	RONALD J PALAGI, P.C., L.L.O.	OMAHA	1000000	ENTERPRISE BANK NATL ASSOC	OMAHA
7A	ASIAN MARKETS, LLC	OMAHA	800000	ENTERPRISE BANK NATL ASSOC	OMAHA
7A	ADMINISTRATION SPECIALISTS OF	OMAHA	200000	PINNACLE BANK	LINCOLN
7A	SIEGMUND PHYSICAL THERAPY P.C	OMAHA	90000	NORTHWEST BANK	SPENCER
7A	SGP Services, Inc.	OMAHA	499000	WELLS FARGO BANK NATL ASSOC	SIOUX FALLS
7A	Black Diamond Enterprises Inc	WALTON	25000	U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	CINCINNATI
504	Diabetic Outreach LLC	Lincoln	108000	NEBRASKA ECONOMIC DEVEL CORP	LINCOLN
504	Anytime Fitness	David city	92000	NEBRASKA ECONOMIC DEVEL CORP	LINCOLN
7A	Brewburgers Inc	Syracuse	160000	FIRST STATE BANK	GOTHENBURG
7A	Wilcox Properties of Fort Calh	Fort calhoun	2000000	AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK	OMAHA
7A	Musaica Imports LLC	Omaha	75000	CENTRIS FCU	OMAHA
7A	Alpha Rehabilitation P. C.	Kearney	23000	PLATTE VALLEY ST. BK & TR CO	KEARNEY
ARC	BRADFORD CLARK	LINCOLN	17900	CORNHUSKER BANK	LINCOLN
7A	TRINITY ENTERPRISES, INC. DBA	OGALLALA	56000	ADAMS BANK & TRUST	OGALLALA
7A	Sutko Real Estate Services, In	OMAHA	1248000	WELLS FARGO BANK NATL ASSOC	SIOUX FALLS
7A	Lynn Leonard	OMAHA	130500	FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF OMAHA	OMAHA
7A	Lawn Order Inc.	Nebraska city	28000	HEARTLAND COMMUNITY BANK	BENNET
7A	BETZ CORPORATION	GERING	1185000	PLATTE VALLEY BANK	SCOTTSBLUFF
7A	GNM OMAHA LLC	OMAHA	50000	UNION BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	LINCOLN
7A	GNM OMAHA LLC	OMAHA	50000	UNION BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	LINCOLN
7A	HOLE LOTTA YUM, LLC	BENNINGTON	253600	CHARTER WEST NATIONAL BANK	WEST POINT
7A	DONALD L. GARDINER	OMAHA	121800	SECURITY NATL BK - OMAHA	OMAHA
7A	GARDEN PATCH CREATIVE LEARNING	OMAHA	150000	FIRST COMMUNITY BANK	SIDNEY
7A	WEATHERCRAFT ENTERPRISES, INC.	OMAHA	550000	BANK OF BENNINGTON	BENNINGTON
7A	Aussie Fencing & Products, L.L	OMAHA	25000	FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF OMAHA	OMAHA
7A	Aussie Fencing & Products, L.L	OMAHA	50000	FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF OMAHA	OMAHA
7A	WEATHERCRAFT ENTERPRISES, INC.	OMAHA	800000	BANK OF BENNINGTON	BENNINGTON
7A	EDWARD SWANSON AND HOLLY SWANS	PIERCE	323500	MIDWEST BK NATL ASSOC	PIERCE
7A	HGH Landscape & Design LLC	Omaha	50000	CENTRIS FCU	OMAHA
7A	MEDWELL II, LLC	OMAHA	417300	CENTRIS FCU	OMAHA
ARC	WETZEL & TRUAX, INC.	NORFOLK	35000	MIDWEST BK NATL ASSOC	PIERCE
ARC	PEACEFUL PRAIRIE NURSERY INC	MITHCELL	35000	PLATTE VALLEY BANK	SCOTTSBLUFF
7A	Posh & Precious	Aurora	10000	PINNACLE BANK	LINCOLN
ARC	HUNT IRRIGATION, INC.	LINCOLN	35000	UNION BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	LINCOLN